



**Montgomery County, MD
Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
October 12th, 2011**

Welcome and Approval of September Meeting Summary Minutes:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, convened the meeting. Charlie Crawford, Vice Chair, made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The September Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved.

Introduction of New Commission Members:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, introduced the new members of the Commission.

- **Person with Disability Reps:** Sean Blake, Sarah Gotbaum, Hilary Kaplan, Mark Loberg, Jonathan Pfeffer, Diana Stewart
- **Agency Reps:** Jeremy Buzzell, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, Office of Disability Policy and Outreach; Damian Gregory, Independence Now; Ted Gutman, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- **Parent Rep:** Francesca Pellegrino

“Respect the Space” Update ~ Mike Subin, Special Assistant, County Executive

Mike Subin was asked by County Executive Isiah Leggett to develop a campaign to educate the public about the importance of accessible parking for individuals with disabilities and leaving the spaces available for those that really need them. County Executive Leggett will be holding a press conference to launch the “Respect the Space” campaign in mid-November before Thanksgiving. Lucille Baur, Office of Public Information and Staff Liaison to the Department of Police, will be developing several Public Service Announcements. There will be opportunities for Commissioners to become involved with the campaign as the County surveys parking lots and spaces to ensure they are adequately signed and marked as well as assesses accessible parking being available to those who need it. Volunteers will be trained on how to check for valid tags and placards and proper accessible signage. If spaces are not appropriately marked, a letter will be sent to the property owner. If the property owner does not comply after receiving the letter, the issue will be sent to Permitting Services where they can then issue a citation.

The [Maryland Accessibility Code](#) details the standards required for proper accessibility signage and markings.

Project Civic Access and Montgomery County Government – Updated on How the Commission Will Be Involved In The County’s Establishment of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Workgroup ~ Nancy Greene, ADA Compliance Manager, Department of General Services, Montgomery County Government

View Montgomery County’s Settlement Agreement with Department of Justice (DOJ):

www.ada.gov/montgomery_co_pca/montgomery_co_sa.htm

Nancy Greene introduced Anil Saini and Steve Maggi who are part of the ADA Compliance Team. Anil handles ADA complaint resolutions and monitors the sign language interpreter contract. Steve is a construction representative and he will be working with contractors on bringing buildings up to ADA standards.

Project Civic Access part of the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) wide-ranging effort to ensure that counties, cities, towns, and villages comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by eliminating physical and communication barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in community life. The

initiative began in 1999 to show progress since the ADA was enacted and to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the ADA. The survey results indicated that more enforcement was required.

DOJ began to survey Montgomery County, Maryland in 2006. They surveyed over 110 County buildings and facilities, some of which are owned by Montgomery County Public Schools and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning (M-NCPP). The review was limited to the areas of the facilities used by members of the public during an emergency: parking, the route from the parking area to the area used as a shelter, the area used as a shelter, and toilet facilities serving that area. DOJ also reviewed the County's policies and procedures regarding voting, emergency management and disaster prevention, and sidewalk maintenance to evaluate whether persons with disabilities have an equal opportunity to utilize these programs, and reviewed the Montgomery County Department of Police's policies and procedures regarding providing effective communication to persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

The Agreement lists actions items that the County has already executed including implementation of a sign language interpreter contract and a County developed training program for staff on inclusive emergency sheltering presented by County managers and members of the County's Emergency Preparedness Advisory Panel. To date, over 150 staff have completed the training.

The County has two years to ensure that all new and modified County web pages and content are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Nancy worked with the Department of Technology Services to establish an accessible website policy. A new website is currently being designed with built-in accessibility features. The site will be available for volunteers to test in January/February, 2012. An ADA Compliance Sheriff will also test the pages. The County will also be reviewing its emergency preparedness documents.

The County has hired two ADA experts as contractors to assist with the assessment of the remaining County facilities as well as the planning design phase for new buildings. They will review the plans during construction and conduct a final walkthrough when construction is completed. Universal design will be implemented, when possible. For example, in new construction automatic sliding doors will be installed. In heavily used public facilities, bathrooms will be design as such so that no doors are necessary to enter them. The County has also hired an assistive listening expert.

The County will also be incorporating the new DOJ 2010 standards in their remediation efforts in County facilities, particularly recreation facilities such as pools, playgrounds, exercise rooms, and outdoor areas. M-NCPP has 445 properties that will be surveyed.

The ADA Compliance Office will be conducting a survey of every program and service offered by the County. Nancy will be developing a survey assessment tool that Departments can use. She asked for suggestions regarding specific programs and services that should be reviewed as first as a priority.

In response to the settlement agreement, County Executive Isiah Leggett has asked the Commission on People with Disabilities to work with Nancy Greene and the newly established ADA Compliance Workgroup to assist the County with making improvements and complying with the ADA. Nancy asked for volunteers with various backgrounds to assist the workgroup. Trish asked for one Commissioner to volunteer to be the liaison of the workgroup and report back to the Commission.

Chair and Vice Chair Report:

Trish Gallalee, Chair, along with Charlie Crawford, Vice-Chair, and Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison, met the Caribbean Advisory Group, Latin America Advisory Group and Middle Eastern Advisory Group along with Joe Adler, Director, Office of Human Resources, and Bruce Adams of the Community Engagement Cluster to discuss updates regarding the hiring preference bill that was enacted last year. Joe offered to speak to groups in the County about how to apply for employment and how the resumes are rated according to the job announcement criteria within Montgomery County Government.

On Thursday, October 6th, Trish attended a County Council Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee roundtable discussion with Chairs of HHS Advisory Boards, Committees, and Commissions to discuss policy priorities.

Charlie Crawford, Vice Chair, attended the event celebrating Maryland Disability History & Awareness Month and National Disability Employment Awareness Month on Tuesday, October 11th at the Silver Spring Civic Building hosted by Independence Now (INNOW), the Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities (MCCPWD), and the Prince George's County Commission for Individuals with Disabilities (PGCIWD). Betsy noted that this was the first time that INNOW, MCCPWD, and PGCIWD had planned an event together. The event was attended by over 150 people. Cathy Raggio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD), gave remarks and an update on what MDOD is working on. Presentations included health insurance options and work incentives, and a panel discussion on issues regarding employment, transportation, and housing.

Trish will be speaking on housing issues at the One-Stop Fair Housing Shop Educational Forum that the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights is hosting on Thursday, November 10th at the Silver Spring Civic Building.

The Commission's Annual Planning Retreat will be held on Wednesday, November 9th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room. There will be a social hour starting from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner and a facilitated event. There will be a discussion regarding Commission goals for the year, which will be a continuation of the goals from last year that included housing, transportation and employment. This year will include the addition of the ADA Compliance Workgroup.

New Commission Member Orientation will be held Thursday, October 20th, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD in the 1st Floor Green Conference Room.

Election of Officers – Nominating Committee Slate of Officers – Nominees Presented by Seth Morgan, Commissioner:

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Seth Morgan, Commissioner, placed into nomination the slate of Trish Gallalee to continue her role as Chair and Charlie Crawford to continue his role of Vice-Chair. No other nominations were taken from the floor. Mark Loberg, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the slate of officers was elected as nominated.

Roundtable:

Seth Morgan, Commissioner, attended the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) "Getting Real II – Promising Practices in Inclusive Emergency Management for the Whole Community" Conference. The event discussed new ways of assisting individuals with disabilities in times of crisis. Marcie Roth, Senior Advisor on Disability Issues for FEMA, will be presenting to the Commission in February. Seth noted that on November 9th, 2011, FEMA will run a first ever test of the nationwide "Emergency Alert System". It will take place at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time and may last up to three and a half minutes. View the [press release](#) for more information.

Angela Washington, Ex-Officio Member, Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Manager, Office of Human Resources, was asked to comment on three modifications that are currently being discussed for the hiring preference: 1) to modify the definition of a veteran so that it only applies to those individuals that have left the military in the last five years; 2) people may only apply to entry-level jobs; and 3) the types of veterans that qualify based on their discharge from the service. Angela has notified Joe Adler, Director, OHR, of her objections regarding these changes. She also noted when an individual who has a hiring preference is not hired written documentation must be provided to her as to why they were not selected for the position. In regards to instituting Schedule A in the County, the County Attorney advised that neither she nor Betsy Luecking, Staff, is able to pursue this further due to ethics violation. Commissioners can advocate for Schedule A as private citizens. Angela has been working with Carroll Community College and the Maryland State

Correctional Police Training Academy. It was suggested that a course be developed that would train police officers on how to appropriately work with individuals with disabilities, including clients and employees.

Community Speaks: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Next Full Commission Meeting: Wednesday, November 9th, 2011 – Annual Planning Meeting – Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Rockville, MD – 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Meeting: Wednesday, November 16th, 2011 – 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD – 1st Floor Tan Conference Room, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Office Services Coordinator
Betsy Luecking, Disability Policy Specialist